

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 35168

USOECD

EXCON

E.O. 11652: XGDS1
TAGS: COCOM, ESTC
SUBJ: CONGRESSIONAL STAFF VISIT RE COCOM

REF: STATE 275701 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF REFTEL USDEL EXPLAINED TO SEVERAL OTHER COCOM DELEGATES THAT THERE WAS A GOOD POSSIBILITY THAT THERE WOULD BE A CONGRESSIONAL STUDY MISSION ON COCOM AND EXPORT CONTROL VISITING PARIS AND THAT THE TWO CONGRESSIONAL STAFF AIDES COMPOSING THIS MISSION WOULD PROBABLY BE ATTENDING AT LEAST ONE MEETING OF COCOM. USDEL EXPLAINED THAT ARRANGMENTS WERE BEING MADE FOR THESE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS TO BE ACCREDITED AS PART OF THE U.S. DELEGATION.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY THE FRENCH DEL INFORMED THE USDEL THAT HIS AUTHORITIES "AT A HIGH LEVEL" WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THESE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN A COCOM MEETING. HE NOTED THAT HIS AUTHORITIES REALIZE THAT EVERY MEMBER GOVERNMENT CAN
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DETERMINE THE COMPOSITION OF ITS OWN DELEGATION. HOWEVER, THEY FEEL THAT IF THESE CONGRESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS VISIT COCOM AND WRITE A REPORT ABOUT THAT ORGANIZATION, IT MIGHT RESULT IN COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS OF THE FRENCH ASSEMBLY ASKING TO PARTICIPATE IN COCOM MEETINGS. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE STUDY MISSION MIGHT PUBLISH A PUBLIC REPORT, USDEL REITERATED THAT

IF THE STAFF AIDES PARTICIPATED IN A COCOM MEETING THEY WOULD DO SO AS PART OF THE U.S. DELEGATION AND WOULD BE INFORMED OF THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE COCOM PROCEEDINGS.

3. THE ITALIAN DEL EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL VIEW TO USDEL THAT A PUBLIC REPORT BY A U.S. CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON COCOM COULD WELL ENCOURAGE THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS OF PARLIMENT TO LAUNCH ITS OWN INVESTIGATION OF COCOM. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT MAKES NO DIRECT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO COCOM AND LIMITS ITS SUPPORT TO THE ASSIGNMENT OF AN ITALIAN DIPLOMAT (OSTENSIBLY ATTACHED TO THE ITALIAN OECD MISSION) AS THE COCOM CHAIRMAN. THIS IS DONE PRIMARILY TO AVOID HAVING THE COMMUNIST PARTY RAISE THE ISSUE OF ITALY'S PARTICIPATION IN COCOM DURING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES ON THE ITALIAN BUDGET.
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